



NEWS RELEASE

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North Dakota Department of Health Pursues National Accreditation

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is seeking to become nationally-accredited under the auspices of the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). To date, six state health departments have achieved this status; North Dakota intends to join this elite group that is recognized for professionalism in public health.

“As a department, we felt committed to the ideals of accredited public health status. We have already begun the process that leads to accreditation and hope to achieve that status by late 2015 or early 2016,” according to State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D., M.P.H.T.M. In September, 2012, the NDDoH initiated a state health assessment process to engage community partners and identify priority health status areas for improvement. The following 10 priorities were identified; overweight/obesity, poverty, diabetes, binge drinking, cardiovascular disease, lack of physical exercise, suicide, distracted driving, drinking and driving, and American Indian disparities. The Health Status Report for North Dakota can be found at <http://www.ndhealth.gov/phsp/Assessment.aspx>. The assessment guides the state health improvement plan and supports alignment of strategic priorities throughout the public health system.

The accreditation system is designed to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the services public health departments provide. The standards address a range of programs and activities, including environmental health, health education, health promotion, community health, chronic disease prevention and control, communicable disease, injury prevention, maternal and child health, public health emergency preparedness, access to clinical services, public health laboratory services, governance and management/administration. Because the accreditation process assesses such a wide range of public health services, achieving accreditation demonstrates the professional capabilities that the accredited health department provides.

For more information and to provide comments on the state health assessment, contact Kelly Nagel, Public Health Liaison, at 701.952.8195.

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